

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

October 7, 2002

5:00 PM

Chairman O'Neil called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen O'Neil, Shea, Smith, Lopez

Absent: Alderman Wihby

Messrs: R. MacKenzie, P. Martineau, M. Tessier, F. Torres, B. Thomas,
Deputy Chief Robinson, D. Dunfey, D. Anagnost, D. Scannell,
S. Lewry

Chairman O'Neil stated we will hold off on Item 3 until the end of the meeting.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 4 of the agenda:

Resolution and budget authorization authorizing acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$471.14 (Federal) for the 2000 CIP 420700 Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant.

Alderman Smith moved to approve the resolution and budget authorization.
Alderman Shea duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Shea asked how many vests are you going to get.

Deputy Chief Robinson stated there are 20 vests that will be ordered. We are paying \$9,900 out of our funds.

Chairman O'Neil called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 5 of the agenda:

Resolution and budget authorization authorizing acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$1,772,000.00 (State) for the FY2001 711001 Public Works Infrastructure Improvements Program.

Alderman Lopez moved to approve the resolution and budget authorization. Alderman Shea duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Lopez asked, Mr. MacKenzie, in reference to this as you are well aware we allocated over \$1 million for the Amoskeag Bridge. Can any of this money be utilized for the Amoskeag Bridge to give us our money back?

Mr. MacKenzie answered yes. In theory this money could be used for the Amoskeag Bridge. It also means, though, that projects, which have been scheduled for this year, could not get done.

Alderman Lopez stated I think we need to have some discussion and get some more information as to how much of this money could be used so we could save some money on the tax rate.

Mr. Bruce Thomas stated I do not think this money can be used for the Amoskeag Bridge unless the project is entered into the State's Bridge Maintenance Program. The problem with that program is that it is already tapped out for the next few years anyway. All we are asking with this change is to add the money that was actually approved previously. This is the 80% match that the State will provide for the South Main Street project that is ongoing, the Parker Street project and the other projects that we have entered into this program for the next couple of years.

Alderman Lopez replied I understand that but also this money is for rehabilitation of bridges. We have a problem with the Amoskeag Bridge and we have to get it fixed because it is between the east and West Side so it becomes our number one priority. As you are well aware, priorities should be looked at and if there is any possible way that we can use some of this money to offset the cost that it is going to take the City to do over there.

Chairman O'Neil asked for clarification you are talking about the Bridge Street Bridge right.

Alderman Lopez answered yes that is right. I would like to have not probably or could but a definite...

Mr. Thomas interjected it is definitely no with the Notre Dame Bridge because it has been denied from the State. We have requested that the State provide us with an 80% match, but they have denied that request.

Alderman Lopez stated they have denied the request but they are giving us money for rehabilitation of bridges. Isn't that our decision?

Mr. Thomas responded no. The money that they have...they have matched money that we have already requested for those other bridges. This request is really to modify forms that should have been...it should have been on those forms two years ago when they were written up for the bridges that we currently have on that list.

Alderman Lopez stated I am going to accept this but I do want to see some documentation regarding the State telling us that we can't use this money.

Mr. Thomas replied I don't have a letter with me but I do have a letter from the State.

Alderman Lopez asked will you work it out with Mr. MacKenzie and make sure that we get that information before the next Board meeting.

Chairman O'Neil stated just get it to the Clerk's Office and they will distribute it.

Chairman O'Neil called for a vote on the motion to approve the resolution and budget authorization. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Alderman Lopez asked can we skip Item 6 until we get to Item 11.

Chairman O'Neil agreed.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 7 of the agenda:

Resolution and budget authorization authorizing acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$17,435.00 (Federal) for the 2003 CIP 411503 Domestic Preparedness Equipment Funds.

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to approve the resolution and budget authorization.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 8 of the agenda:

Resolution and budget authorization authorizing acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$40,000.00 (Other) for the FY2003 713403 Wetlands Mitigation Project.

Alderman Lopez moved to approve the resolution and budget authorizations. Alderman Shea duly seconded the motion.

Chairman O'Neil asked, Bob, is this used towards purchasing some of that land out there.

Mr. MacKenzie answered this is actually from a private developer and can be used...I know this came up at the Board level the other night. I believe it can be used for acquisition and was specifically directed to describe it as such in the Crystal Lake Watershed area.

Alderman Shea asked who will make the decision and when concerning the use of this money.

Mr. MacKenzie answered the only active parcel being considered right now is Phase II of LaMontagne's project at Phillip's Farm. The developer has said that the Crystal Lake Preservation Committee or the City would have one year to come up with funds. This would be earmarked towards that specific parcel if for some reason the balance of the money couldn't come up then we would have to come back to you to talk about other parcels that it could be used for.

Alderman Shea asked so it has to be utilized within one year correct.

Mr. MacKenzie answered correct.

Chairman O'Neil asked do you know when that date runs out.

Mr. MacKenzie answered no I don't.

Chairman O'Neil called for a vote on the motion to approve the resolution and budget authorization. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 9 of the agenda:

Resolution and budget authorization authorizing acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$5,000.00 (Cash) for the 2003 CIP 811303 Community Development Initiatives Program.

Alderman Smith moved to approve the resolution and budget authorization.
Alderman Lopez duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Shea stated they claim here that it is \$5,000 for printing of the housing task force packet. I am not sure, is that...

Mr. MacKenzie interjected we did go out to several printers to get costs. We are producing a large number of these because there have been a number of requests.

This is actually a State grant that we are getting from NH Housing Finance Authority to pay for the printing.

Alderman Shea asked and where do these go after they are printed.

Mr. MacKenzie answered primarily to the Board, the general public; some will go to NH Housing Finance because they would like to use it in other communities. We expect probably 300 copies of this report

Alderman Shea asked and the purpose for this is what.

Mr. MacKenzie answered the purpose is for the Housing Task Force recommendations to get out. It is an educational piece primarily to inform the general public about the housing issues in the City.

Chairman O'Neil called for a vote on the motion to approve the resolution and budget authorization. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 10 of the agenda:

CIP Budget Authorizations:

2001	411201	COPS MORE 2001 – Revision #2
2002	411402	Weed and Seed Pilot Program – Revision #2
2002	510502	PAL Center Renovations – Revision #1
2002	612302	Veterans Park Pavilion Set-up – Revision #1
2002	714302	Bridge Rehabilitation – Revision #1
2003	410103	Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant
2003	411003	Youth Attendant Program
2003	611303	Neighborworks Homeownership Center – Revision #1

On motion of Alderman Lopez, duly seconded by Alderman Smith, it was voted to approve the CIP budget authorizations.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 11 of the agenda:

Communication from Robert MacKenzie, Director of Planning, relative to preliminary work or acceptance of proposals of the city's Housing Initiatives.

Mr. MacKenzie stated I did just want to go over this briefly so the Committee is aware of where the funds are coming from, what they can be used for and what direction we are headed in with these funds. These are actually funds from the

Department of Housing and Urban Development that is specifically intended for housing and there are a number of requirements that we must meet from environmental to others to utilize these funds. Generally, they have to be used to provide for affordable housing in different degrees in the City. We have received a number of requests as of late and we were going to work with each one of these groups to see how the funds would be allocated between these groups. If I could go over each one of these proposals, the first is the New Horizons Emergency Shelter. Presently, the demands significantly exceed the ability of that operation to handle the people that want to come in and use the facility. They are looking to make some internal changes. There would be no additions to the exterior of the building, but New Horizons would make some internal changes to the building to make it a more workable situation and to add actual room within the building. We don't have an exact estimate of that yet. We will be working with New Horizons and will be looking to see if any of that could be funded out of the City's Federal housing funds.

Alderman Shea asked if this were to be actualized would that eliminate the use of French Hall over at Hackett Hill. Is that part of this?

Mr. MacKenzie answered it would make it...I would probably have Paul Martineau speak to that.

Chairman O'Neil stated Commissioner Martineau is here as well as Mike Tessier, the Director of New Horizons. I would ask them both to come forward.

Commissioner Martineau stated actually French Hall hasn't been used and we are not contemplating using that this winter. It was used last winter from January through March but we are looking for alternative plans to house these people because we don't anticipate that it will be available.

Alderman Shea stated oh you don't anticipate it being available. My question was would it eliminate the usage of French Hall if you were to have this particular added housing at the shelter.

Commissioner Martineau replied yes. It would take care of the overflow. I misunderstood your question. I apologize.

Chairman O'Neil asked, Mike, could you just quickly for the Committee review the number of beds available versus the demand.

Mr. Mike Tessier stated our occupancy says that we can have 67 people reside. Last winter we had 160 people there at our highest. We are expecting, between our Manchester facility and our Union Street facility that we will be up around 235

this year. We desperately need to get to the point where we are legitimately taking the people that we can. If we are forced to go to occupancy at that point, then I would make referrals over to Paul so that we could work something out in another capacity.

Alderman Lopez stated I know that Mr. MacKenzie said there is no cost but does anybody have any type of number in their head.

Mr. Tessier replied all I can tell you is that we are looking at going back when it was a Boy's and Girl's Club. The swimming pool area has an exceedingly high ceiling. What we are hoping to do is put a floor above where our food pantry is now in order to recoup some extra bed space above there. The engineers were in last week. They looked around. They have a copy of our blueprints. I expect that they will be coming up with something in the foreseeable future.

Chairman O'Neil stated I happened to tour there with Mr. Tessier about a month ago and there is a lot of wasted space and putting in that mezzanine makes a lot of sense. If no one has any further questions for the Commissioner or Mr. Tessier, we will continue. Bob, would you want us to take action on the individual items here? I know they are at different levels. One we need to take action on tonight I believe.

Mr. MacKenzie replied these come under our CIP accounts so we don't need an action to approve. I did want to bring it to the Committee and get your concurrence so if you wanted to vote on concurrence on each of these individually, I would be happy to accept that.

Alderman Lopez stated I just don't know what is top priority here. I know we need to do these things and we are talking about 2003 and I think they are talking about this winter. I held up Item 6 because of this. Who is making the priority on the HOME money and how much HOME money do we have?

Mr. MacKenzie replied we have roughly \$1 million in Federal HOME funds. This particular project, however, will not qualify under HUD requirements so we were looking to use...there is a housing fund where we get payments back from Eastgate Apartments each year and that fund is somewhat less than \$200,000. That is the only source of funds that we can identify that could be used for this emergency shelter. In that way, this particular one would not be competing against any of these other projects.

Alderman Smith stated I can't see how I can vote unless you have a cost estimate. I know it is a worthy cause and so forth but I would like to see what it is in dollars and sense before I make a determination.

Chairman O'Neil stated I think the intent of Bob going through this was just to point out the number of different initiatives that are going around the City with the various agencies. You may continue to Item 2, Bob.

Mr. MacKenzie stated as you know the Brown School has been available for some time. It has been looked at by various departments. There was a proposal to the Board for the West Side Community Center, which the Board has adopted to create a new senior center beside the existing West Side Center and then the existing center would become the West Side Library. If and when that happens then that will obviate the need to use the Brown School for a West Side Library. Also, as part of the proposal on the senior center there will be nine dwelling units that will be lost at that site so the intent of the last proposal was to utilize the Brown School for housing. We have worked with two agencies who would like to work together to bring housing to that site, which would be renovation of the existing building and some addition in the back. Those are the Housing & Redevelopment Authority and Families in Transition. They are looking at creating a program that probably wouldn't get underway until next year but we would expect that there would be some need for initial planning and design funds. We are looking at the present time at roughly \$200,000 to \$300,000 to do the initial planning, feasibility and design work.

Chairman O'Neil asked, Bob, is it my understanding that at some point next year and you may be able to tell me the date or tell the Committee the date, that we will receive additional HOME funds. Correct?

Mr. MacKenzie answered yes. Some time next March we will be allocated by HUD another chunk of HOME funds, probably close to \$800,000. We would anticipate that those would be used towards this Brown School project.

Alderman Lopez stated if we have all of these projects on the books is there some type of formula where they could give us more money if we are showing that we have all of these major projects or is it just \$800,000 a year.

Mr. MacKenzie replied there is a fairly sophisticated formula that Congress uses to allocate the money and it is based on poverty, the age of housing and other factors. We could perhaps try to get some special initiative funds but there are usually very small pots of that. Our normal allocation of both HOME funds and CDBG is on a set formula. We can't change those.

Alderman Shea stated, Bob, you mentioned that the feasibility and the other cost of the preliminary design would be about \$200,000. Is that correct?

Mr. MacKenzie replied I failed to mention that we have not negotiated yet the sale price.

Alderman Shea stated we had discussed design-build and I am wondering if that is something that could be put into this scenario as well because of the cost that is involved. Could that be a consideration as well?

Mr. MacKenzie replied it is possible. Since most of the funds going into this would be HUD funds, we would have to determine whether HUD would allow that or not but we could certainly check that.

Alderman Shea stated I think that if you have the person who designs it build it you might be able to use more of the funding for other projects.

Chairman O'Neil stated the Director of the Housing & Redevelopment Authority and some of his senior staff are here. I don't know if there is anything they want to add. All we really are is the funding source, correct, Bob? It is really their determination on the delivery method.

Mr. MacKenzie responded the cost would be much larger than we would be putting in. They would be getting other funds from different sources to make the project work. I am not sure what other requirements they would have on the bid procedures.

Alderman Shea stated well the idea is planted and they can carry the ball if they wish.

Alderman Lopez stated I guess what I am having a hard time with is if the MHRA is ready to let's say move on these projects and I don't know that but if we need \$750,000 and we are only getting \$800,000 at some point somebody is going to have to come forward and say this is the number one project we want to do in 2003 or 2004. Are you talking 2003 or 2004?

Mr. MacKenzie responded the funds that we are talking about today are out of FY03 funds.

Alderman Lopez stated so if we only have \$1 million and we are going to possibly give \$250,000 to Neighborhood Housing for Item 6 who is coming forward to say that for the community this is the number one project that we should give our HOME monies to. Who is going to tell us that?

Mr. MacKenzie replied I believe that generally we can accomplish all of these

projects with the next two year's funds. Now Brown School and I don't know if Dick Dunfey is here but looking at other funding sources and other issues, that is probably going to be an FY04 project because we can't get certain types of funds until next year but they will need funds to get the project started and potentially we could negotiate for sale price. I believe that all of these projects could be accomplished if we consider that we are using the two year's worth – this year's FY03 and next year's FY04 of housing HOME funds.

Alderman Lopez stated just to follow that up, if I think and I know it doesn't qualify but that New Horizons was the number one project and it can't use HOME funds and then I look at the Brown School project and say it has been around a long time, how do I make a decision as to what is a necessity to the City of Manchester. Is it more important for me to take care of building housing at the Brown School or building housing on the nine or ten acres we have on Wellington Road? I know a year ago we went through a work-study on housing in the City of Manchester. At some point again I stress that some staff or even other people...everybody is going to say that their project is important but how do I vote on what is important to the community? Who is going to say that?

Mr. MacKenzie responded again if there were \$2 million worth of projects and we only had \$1 million then there would have to be some tough decisions and we would bring some of the pros and cons to you but again I don't think there is a need to prioritize these projects because given the funding cycle and the schedule of these projects, I believe we can accomplish all of these without pitting one project against the other.

Alderman Lopez asked in a two-year plan.

Mr. MacKenzie replied yes in a two-year plan.

Alderman Smith asked how many are on the Manchester Housing waiting list for affordable housing.

Mr. Dick Dunfey answered 4,000.

Chairman O'Neil asked Bob to move on to Item 3.

Mr. MacKenzie stated the next one was a request by Neighborhood Housing Services to work on their Renaissance 7 project, which is the Straw Mansion and the old Midtown Motel up off of Bridge Street. When we reviewed past funding projects, Item 6 is actually a way to fund that project without cutting into our current \$1 million pool of funds. I know that the NHS staff is here to speak about

it but again there was an older project that was directed towards NHS that we could reuse towards this particular project.

Chairman O'Neil asked so you are saying that their request for \$250,000 would not come out of that pool for \$1 million.

Mr. MacKenzie answered correct.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 6 of the agenda:

Resolution and budget authorizations decreasing 2002 CIP 611702 HOME Affordable Housing Initiative by \$250,000.00 and increasing 2003 CIP 611403 Renaissance 7 Affordable Housing Project by \$250,000.00.

Alderman Lopez moved to approve the resolution and budget authorizations. Alderman Smith duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Lopez stated I asked Steve Tellier...did he get a hold of you today regarding how they came up with \$18,000 in lieu of taxes.

Mr. MacKenzie replied we did play phone tag and I left him a message. He was trying to figure out what properties they were. I did leave a message on his phone.

Chairman O'Neil asked Felix Torres and Steve Tellier to come forward to address this.

Mr. Torres stated NHS has always paid full taxes on our properties. I know in Bob's write up it mentions payment in lieu of but we always pay our taxes so whatever the property is assessed at, we will pay our full freight as we always have.

Alderman Lopez replied that is the point I wanted to make. Steve, I asked you this afternoon if you would look into it. So, they will pay full market value?

Mr. Tellier responded yes they do pay full market value on all of their properties. What I don't have a comment on at this time is the \$18,000 estimate that they put in. It may be more than that but they do pay full market value and they went through the recent revaluation just like everybody else.

Mr. Torres stated and that \$18,000 was actually a Planning Department estimate. Our own estimate is \$24,000.

Alderman Lopez asked so you have no problem with us approving this providing you pay full market value.

Mr. Torres answered yes, absolutely.

Chairman O'Neil called for a vote on the motion to approve the resolution and budget authorizations. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman O'Neil asked Bob MacKenzie to proceed with Item 4 of Item 11.

Mr. MacKenzie answered we did get a request on the Biron Street project. Staff is very familiar with that. It has gone through the site plan review process at the Planning Board. Whenever a private company applies for these funds, however, we do have to go out for proposals to see if there are any other private companies that would be interested. We have done that and those proposals are due back, I believe, this Friday, October 11 so we will find out if there are any other proposals. I probably won't go into too much detail on this tonight since there may be other proposals. Again, we are familiar with the project. It is a fairly large project. It is going to have both senior housing and family housing in it.

Chairman O'Neil stated my understanding is that the Board would need to take some action the night of October 15 in order to meet financing requirements of the project by November 1. I know the developer, Mr. Anagnost is here and I think the Housing Authority is in some partnership with them with regards to some of the units. Dick, I don't know if you want to come forward. My understanding is that you need to get the financing finalized on this.

Mr. Dick Anagnost stated the funds that we are requesting from the City represent roughly 4% of the total funds going into the project. The total project is 150 units of which 90 are reserved for the elderly, which is the affordable portion of it. Manchester Housing has approved that they will be utilizing 60 of those 90 units for people who are currently on their list. The RFP, as Mr. MacKenzie pointed out, does have a return date of October 11. Our response has already been provided to the City for that RFP. This section of financing is actually tied to a bond that is being provided by NH Housing Finance and guaranteed by HUD. NH Housing Finance is putting in \$2.5 million of their own housing funds, the same HOME funds that we are requesting of the City. We are also leveraging our private development investments through the tax credit program. There is a whole series of layered financing that pulls together this situation. We will be before the full Board on October 15 for approval with hopefully the recommendation for approval from this Committee.

Chairman O'Neil stated it is a timing problem with the RFP and when the Committee is meeting and the Board is meeting. The stars were not aligned on this one but the bottom line is they need to get some word from the City pretty close to October 15 in order to wrap up the balance of the financing.

Alderman Shea asked could we make a recommendation this evening.

Chairman O'Neil answered legally we can't vote because the RFP's aren't in but maybe conceptually and we could follow it up with a phone poll on Monday or Tuesday for a recommendation and get it on the agenda for next week.

Alderman Shea moved to approve the Biron Street project conceptually and conduct a phone poll once the RFP's are in.

Alderman Lopez asked do we have \$700,000.

Chairman O'Neil answered we have \$1 million.

Mr. MacKenzie replied yes. Out of the different pie here we are actually looking at \$600,000.

Alderman Lopez stated as long as we have it I am fine with it.

Chairman O'Neil asked does that number work. I see \$700,000 on the agenda. Does \$600,000 work?

Mr. Anagnost answered yes that is fine.

Chairman O'Neil stated so once the RFP's come in the CIP staff will coordinate with the Clerk to do a phone poll at the beginning of the week and we will have it on the agenda for next Tuesday night for discussion and hopefully approval.

Mr. Anagnost stated thank you for your consideration.

Chairman O'Neil stated this is, as we talked earlier, an important part of these partnerships that we have going on. We talked about a waiting list of 4,000 people and I am not sure, Bob, did we ever run into private developers really leveraging these HOME funds to this extent?

Mr. MacKenzie replied not to this extent.

Chairman O'Neil stated so this is a first and that is why the RFP fell into it, etc.

Alderman Smith duly seconded the motion to approve the Biron Street project conceptually and conduct a phone poll once the RFP's are in.

Chairman O'Neil called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman O'Neil asked Mr. MacKenzie to proceed with Item 5.

Mr. MacKenzie stated the YMCA had some vacant space on upper stories and they have been working with a couple of the local colleges to see if they could put student housing up on top of the Y. They have been looking for certain types of funds. We have not confirmed yet whether HUD monies can be used for student housing or not so we will be following through with the Department of Urban Housing & Development. I think preliminary indications were that perhaps we could not use them, although it is possible we could use certain funds to do things like help them with an elevator. So this one is just in its early stages and we will keep the Board advised as to how this project progresses. On Item 6, this is again fairly preliminary. I know that the Manchester Housing & Redevelopment Authority has been looking into the Gale Home to see if that could be converted into housing. They do have a strong interest in that but I don't believe any decision has been made by the Gale Home Trust as to how that will be disposed of yet. We will continue to work with the MHRA to see how that proceeds.

Chairman O'Neil stated I just want to applaud Dick and his staff for the aggressiveness, whether it is partnering or on their own in trying to create more housing opportunities in the City. Congratulations on that.

Alderman Lopez stated while the MHRA is here, I need to ask them a question. With 4,000 people on the waiting list, I have two senior citizens who both live in two bedroom apartments and their spouse has died and they have been informed that they need to get out and go into a one-bedroom but you don't have any one-bedrooms so they have to continue to pay the rent for a two-bedroom. Is that correct? I promised them I would ask you the question as soon as I saw you. How does that work?

Mr. Dunfey replied I would have to look into the individual circumstances. They would be what we call over housed once they are reduced to a one person household but without knowing their specific circumstances I wouldn't be able to give you a specific answer. I would be happy to check with you and if you provide the names to me I can get back to you.

Alderman Lopez stated I will do that but there are circumstances where you or the Commission can leave them there until such a time.

Mr. Dunfey replied it depends on the situation. I hate to speculate without knowing the specifics but I would be happy to look into it for you.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Smith, it was voted to receive and file Item 11.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 12 of the agenda:

Communication from Chief Driscoll seeking authorization to purchase three new police vehicles with a portion of funds received from the Department of Justice Equipment Block Grant.

Chairman O'Neil asked can we get a clarification. This says three vehicles, but I thought I read five.

Deputy Chief Robinson stated the letter that was sent was for a total of five vehicles.

Chairman O'Neil asked so that is the correct amount, five vehicles.

Deputy Chief Robinson answered yes, Sir.

Chairman O'Neil asked does that also include getting a license plate, which we know sometimes takes an act of God around here.

Deputy Chief Robinson answered yes. In most cases the license plates are going to be...in four of the cases the license plates will be transferred and in one case it is a new license plate.

Chairman O'Neil stated so it would be helpful if you got the approval tonight for the additional license plate.

Deputy Chief Robinson replied sometimes it takes us a couple of months to get a license plate.

Alderman Shea stated there is \$194,631 and the total for the five vehicles is \$106,000. What is the difference here?

Deputy Chief Robinson replied this is a block grant. This is our fourth year of the law enforcement block grant. The block grants have to be used for new and innovative things for the department. One of the things that we are not allowed to do under a block grant is called supplanting. That is one of the unique things here

with the vehicles. We presently have 65 vehicles that are registered to the City of Manchester. We are going to have to show the government that we didn't supplant any of these vehicles. For example, we can't use this money to replace vehicles that are on the road. That is supplanting and we can't do that. These are new added vehicles. That is how we got our mobile data terminals. It is how we got our riot equipment. It is how we have gotten more radios. Over the last four years...again we have gotten a local block grant with a match. In this case the match from the City is \$19,000. That is how we have been getting equipment.

Alderman Shea asked so in essence the \$106,000 is going to complete the \$194,000 grant. Is that correct because you have utilized other types of expenditures between then and now?

Deputy Chief Robinson answered correct. We have to tell the Federal government how we are going to spend all of the money. What the Chief had determined at this time was the need of vehicles as outlined in the letter so we are going to use \$105,000 of that...if you approve it, we are going to ask the government to use that to buy these five vehicles.

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to approve the request from the Chief of Police to purchase five new police vehicles with a portion of funds received from the Department of Justice Equipment Block Grant.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 13 of the agenda:

Communication from Jeff Michelsen, Director of Manchester Emergency Housing, providing a breakdown of FY2002 CIP funding expenditures.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Smith, it was voted to receive and file.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 14 of the agenda:

Communication from Messrs. Garceau and Desmarais requesting the removal of a 12" concrete drainage pipe located at 747 Mammoth Road constructed by the Highway Department in 1969.

Alderman Shea asked maybe Bruce Thomas could come up because we don't have any money in the chronic drain program do we.

Alderman Lopez moved the item for discussion. Alderman Shea duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Lopez stated I would like to bring something to the attention of the Aldermen unless, Bruce, you are going to bring up the meeting that Frank Thomas had on this. Do you know anything about it?

Mr. Thomas replied yes I know about it in general.

Alderman Lopez stated well Alderman Gatsas, myself and Frank Thomas and the two owners of the land met and I will let Bruce address what the problem is but basically they want the drain removed as the correspondence indicated. We said the first thing we would do is send this letter to City Hall and that is how it ended up at the CIP Committee. There is a discrepancy so I think eventually the City Solicitor is going to have to get involved in this and make a determination whether or not they are obligated and I will let you address the issue regarding where the drain is and what the problem is over there.

Mr. Thomas stated I do have a sketch here. I just have one copy but if anybody wants to see it, I have it. The property that these two gentlemen own is on Mammoth Road right across the street from Stockholm Street. It is about 700' or so north of Reservoir Avenue where the Red Cross Blood Center is. Like the gentleman says, we have more or less a permission to enter and construct from the Highway Department. It is not signed by anyone from the Highway Department so we don't really know who was involved at that time but it is definitely on Highway Department letterhead. He did give us permission to install a drain line to outlet water on his pipe. In the letter he wrote to you folks it says that we wetted his land. I doubt that is entirely correct. I think the land was wet before and if you look at the topography sketch that I have here you can see that there has obviously been a stream there forever or for some time anyway. At any rate, he says there is a verbal agreement...he says that the permission to enter and construct does say that the proper maintenance is to be continued by the Department of Highway until such time as the proper and adequate drainage systems are installed in the Mammoth Road area. Typically what we would have to do for that type of work is reconstruct Mammoth Road and we haven't done that. We have done several projects where we have added a sewer main in the area, I understand. We put a sidewalk in the area but we haven't really reconstructed it. The cost to do the work is about \$36,000 and that includes running pipes...actually about 900' up the street from Reservoir Avenue. It is 900' feet from Reservoir Avenue to this guy's property. It costs \$36,000 to do it. The main reason why it is so expensive is \$12,000 is for ledge because the ledge comes right up close to the surface in that area. So it will cost \$36,000 to do the work. We have about \$14,000 in uncommitted funds available to do it. Clearly there is not enough money right now to do that work.

Alderman Lopez stated I think when we had the conversation at the site the problem the owners have is they have a buyer for the property and even at this time I don't know if they signed an agreement or anything but that is one of the things that they had to get out of there so they could put houses in there and seeing that we are short on housing in the City...I don't know whether we want to send this to the City Solicitor's Office or whether we are going to let the Highway Department take care of the problem that has been caused over the number of years for this owner of the property. Do you have any suggestions, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman O'Neil stated well we don't have any money right now. We just raided the chronic drain fund to settle our shortfall. The only thing I can suggest is if it is the intent of the City to address this we are going to have to refer it to the next budget. I don't know what else we can do.

Alderman Smith asked couldn't we get the Highway Department to get together with the City Solicitor and come back to us.

Alderman Smith moved to have the Highway Department and City Solicitor's Office review this request and report back to the Committee. Alderman Shea duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Lopez stated one other point I want to make for the record is nobody signed the Highway letter and it was more of a gentlemen's agreement asking to use their land for a little bit of time. I don't know about reconstruction of Mammoth Road but the other street that comes down they did reconstruct and put a basin in over there to catch the water from coming down. To be fair with the people, back in those days it probably was a handshake and years went by and nobody took care of these two gentlemen.

Alderman Shea stated actually, Bruce, the \$14,000 that is uncommitted, you would need another \$22,000 right.

Mr. Thomas replied right.

Chairman O'Neil stated and that wouldn't allow any other projects to get done in the City either.

Mr. Thomas replied I would like to point out that we do have another issue, an unrelated project on Renard Street and that project would cost about \$12,500 to fix. I know that the Solicitor and that property owner's lawyer has been involved with that one as well.

Chairman O'Neil called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 15 of the agenda:

Petition to discontinue Allen North Back Street.

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to recommend that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen find that Allen North Back Street, having never been opened, built, nor used for public travel has been released from public servitude pursuant to RSA 231:51.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 16 of the agenda:

Petition to discontinue Hebert Street.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to recommend that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen find that Hebert Street, having never been opened, built, nor used for public travel has been released from public servitude pursuant to RSA 231:51.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 17 of the agenda:

Petition to discontinue a portion of Plainfield Street.

On motion of Alderman Lopez, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to recommend that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen find that a portion of Plainfield Street, having never been opened, built, nor used for public travel has been released from public servitude pursuant to RSA 231:51.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 18 of the agenda:

Sewer abatement request of William Anderson (477 Oak Street).

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to approve a sewer abatement at 477 Oak Street in the amount of \$296.05.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 19 of the agenda:

Sewer abatement request of Tax Collector's Office (56 Pine Street).

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to approve a sewer abatement at 56 Pine Street in the amount of \$199.44 plus accrued interest.

TABLED ITEM

20. Resolution and budget authorization authorizing acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$40,000 for FY2002 CIP 811102 Wetland Inventory Evaluation Project.

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to receive and file this item.

Chairman O'Neil stated we will now go back to Item 3 and I will ask David Scannell and Stephanie Lewry to come forward.

Discussion of graffiti-related issues confronting the City.

Mr. Scannell stated you will remember that some time ago you had authorized \$4,000 to be given to Intown for a graffiti eradication program and what you have in front of you are some of the alternatives that are available for addressing the graffiti problem. We could go through what they are. Essentially we have broken it down to three separate alternatives. The first one is to purchase a high powered hose, which would be a relatively small unit that you could mount in a pick-up or an ATV and the people from Intown have actually been looking into the purchase of that type of apparatus. I laid out what the advantages and disadvantages are there. I don't think we need to go through all of them. Again, Intown has had some relationship with private companies that for a prescribed period will go through a designated area on a given day and essentially tell the property owners that on this day the graffiti that is visible is going to be removed. Again, disadvantages and advantages are all established there. We have also had, if you look at number 3, we have also had some discussions with the Office of Youth Services about reviving their paint over program and, in fact, that is something that has actually never really been discontinued. What happens is students who are somehow under the control of the Office of Youth Services will go out to a designated area and actually paint over graffiti, both on public and on private property. Finally, the advantages to that and the disadvantages are laid out there. I wanted Stephanie to talk a little bit more about what she knows about the high-powered hose option and a test that they are going to be doing some time next week.

Ms. Stephanie Lewry stated the high powered hose option is actually a “do-it-yourself” copycat method of what a professional contractor might be doing if we decide we are going to try to remove the graffiti by a pressure wash. The pressure wash is not always successful based on our previous experience with the contractor who did it, but it is generally successful in most circumstances. The contractor that we used also did Central High School and has done some other public buildings in the City. He understands the issues that we deal with with graffiti. The reason why we would attempt to try to do it ourselves is to be able...if we had the equipment, to address graffiti in a more timely manner. The problem with hiring a contractor is that once we have cleaned it all up it could be back again the very next day. So, with that in mind what we have been doing is waiting until it got dark early and cold out and then we would try to remove the graffiti in hopes that the offenders wouldn't be back at least until next summer and actually the past couple of times when we have hired the contractor and done it in the fall that has been the case for the most part. We haven't had too much graffiti over the cold months. Next week my maintenance men are going to rent a pressure wash unit and do some experimenting to see if they can get the graffiti off themselves. They have to buy a certain chemical that dissolves the graffiti and then you spray it off. I understand from doing the research that there are some cities that also use a tank that has a heater on it that gets the water up to about 200 degrees. We think that won't be necessary for the kind of graffiti we have but that is why we are going to experiment next week and see if we have the ability to get rid of the graffiti ourselves. We are talking here about first floor graffiti. Obviously this would be within reach of one man on a hose. We do have some graffiti in the downtown area anyway that is on the second floor. I understand that these graffiti artists have availed themselves of fire escapes and so forth to get up on roofs so we will see some graffiti up on high levels but if we are to remove that graffiti we will have to contract somebody to do that. Anyway, we are going to experiment in the next week to see if purchasing the equipment so that it can be used more frequently would be a viable alternative. We know that we have \$4,000 to deal with and we expect that we should be able to do it for less than that.

Alderman Lopez stated I have spoken to David about this and it is all right for Intown to do something, but it is all over the City. In talking to the Police Department, they keep track of the things that people report to them. The problem being that nobody in the City is responsible. Youth Services say they have youth to do it when they have youth to do it but as far as somebody being responsible, nobody is in charge Citywide. We don't know what the prosecution aspect is from the Police Department either. I know Alderman Shea was very hot on this before and can speak for himself but I do know that we had less a couple of years ago and today we had a lot and it is getting terrible. Even the community policing units are telling us that there are gangs out there putting their initials all over the place and

it is awful. Somebody somewhere along the line needs to be responsible and I don't care who. Intown can take care of downtown but who is going to take care of all of the other things all over the City and who is going to keep track of it? It is a major problem and I know that Alderman Shea got \$15,000 at one time. That wasn't enough to do it but it cleaned it up for awhile. Somebody has to be in charge and that is the problem that we have in my opinion.

Mr. Scannell stated that is one of the reasons we are before you. The \$4,000, I think, is going to suffice in terms of any equipment purposes and Stephanie indicated that a high powered or high pressure hose would be available to anybody who wanted to use it, any City department, but that is where the manpower issue is really the critical issue. Who is going to go out and do it?

Alderman Lopez stated Mr. MacKenzie maybe one of your people can check this out but I understand that Lowell just purchased two of these high powered washers through a grant and maybe we can get information on that. It is awful in the City.

Alderman Smith stated, Stephanie, I noticed in your brochure here that the chemicals are non-toxic. Are you sure of that?

Ms. Lewry replied what I have seen is something that they say has a vegetable base. As I said, this would be the first time that we, ourselves, have tried to remove the graffiti. In the past we used a professional service and all of the liability issues were covered under that service. If we can get the proper materials and do an experiment next week we will see whether or not it is something that Intown itself is willing to take on. I am assuming that there won't be a problem with it and that the chemicals are non-toxic.

Alderman Smith stated I notice that you can't use it on wooden structures and I know that most of the graffiti I have seen is on wooden buildings.

Ms. Lewry stated one of the things that needs to be remembered here is that a lot of the graffiti tags are on private property and we won't be able to deal with private property unless we have the owners permission. As far as dealing with private property in other areas of the City, I would think that graffiti in the public spaces and trying to find a way to deal with that is one thing but graffiti in the private areas is another. We are set-up in the downtown to notify the property owners and tell them we are going to provide a service for you and sign on the dotted line if we can do this but in the rest of the City where you don't have that mechanism set-up, that is a problem. We do have to understand that we are the masters of our own private property and that all residents and owners of property should assume that that is one of their responsibilities, as much as mowing their lawn, to paint out the graffiti. In the public spaces it is possible that...I have

looked at a couple of programs now where they have a fee for service and an organization like mine might want to contract with one of the wards for a certain price that would have to be worked out to cover any issues of wear and tear and liability and so forth. Our men could actually go out to the various areas and clean it up. I am exploring that as a possibility. I realize that every time I have looked to the City for additional support on some things there is no manpower so I am kind of looking to see if we might be able to give some support to the neighborhoods in that way. I don't want to lay this on the table as a proposal until I have brought it to my Board and had some people look into it but it is something I am considering.

Alderman Shea stated I am wondering, Dave and Stephanie, whether Parks & Recreation has some sort of equipment. I know that we used that in years past.

Mr. Scannell stated we did do a survey of the departments asking for anything that we would describe as a high powered hose to get rid of the stuff. I think Parks & Recreation paints over its areas.

Alderman Shea asked Public Works doesn't have anything. I know at one time there was some department in the City that did have some type of equipment to remove graffiti. I am not quite sure which department it was. It was available on a limited basis. Somehow or other they had some kind of equipment for removal because I worked with Stephanie's predecessor on this situation downtown. Although we were allocated \$15,000 we never could use that. That was dispersed somehow and disappeared.

Mr. Scannell replied I could check again with Highway but I think when we did the survey we were told that it did not exist or no longer existed in the City.

Alderman Shea stated Mr. Lemaire was very helpful. What he would do is there would be people who were either culprits that had perpetrated the crime and part of their sentencing was to remove the graffiti and they had certain names that obviously they went by and he would take different, for want of a better word, different patrons of the Youth Service facilities and they would remove the graffiti under his supervision. He went and had the permission of owners of property to do that and I worked with him a few times on that project in my ward. I think that Alderman Lopez hit upon it that it is a pervasive problem unless you have someone directly handling it. I know Alderman O'Neil asked me and I said I am kind of out of this and I would like somebody else to get involved but I think there has to be coordination between Intown and the Aldermanic Board. There has to be some sort of relationship here in terms of the needs. The Police Department does play a role. They do try to document different areas. People obviously that are in the youth programs know that the South baseball area is constantly being

inundated with graffiti and people who work in that area do their own policing in that regard. It is one of the problems that we do have as a community here and some how or other it has to be handled.

Ms. Lewry stated you bring up a point where you say that there is one area that is repeatedly hit – the South baseball field. We have areas in downtown that are repeatedly hit too. I just came back from an International Downtown Association Conference and one of the specific workshops that I went to was on graffiti. They have found in some cities that having a camera in the area that is particularly popular with graffiti artists...they even have voice activated cameras that say, “you are now being filmed.” It actually has deterred people. I don’t know what the cost of these cameras would be but I would be happy to look into it if it looked like that was a direction that the City wanted to go in. I am wondering if it might be something that we might want to consider for certain areas.

Alderman Lopez stated just one final comment from me is that I think it is a big problem and I am wondering if we couldn’t gather people like MHA, Water Works, Airport, etc. and maybe through their resources and expertise they could help the community in some fashion or form and supplement something to the community as a whole because the community does affect them as a whole. It is just an idea that I wanted to throw your way. Maybe Intown could take the lead and put a conference of these department heads or representatives together and say this is a problem. Maybe they have some community type funding. I know the Airport has community type funding where maybe they can help in that particular area. It is just an idea. Would you take the lead on that?

Mr. Scannell replied yes. I think that is a great idea and I think it is going to help, obviously, if we have something that we can give them and say this is literally the tool we are going to use. I guess the concern that I fear is going to come back is manpower. We could do a whole huge public relations campaign where you e-mail in locations, where people consent to have their private property painted over or sprayed but if we don’t have the ability to respond immediately or pretty close to immediately then it loses its value. I think one of the other things that I have learned in doing a little research on this is one of the most effective tools in getting rid of graffiti is addressing what is there in a timely manner. If people see that the City is responsive and does it quickly, that is how they get discouraged because they know their work is going to be for naught for lack of a better term. We have had some discussions with Youth Services and a couple of other City departments earlier on but I think we can bring them back again and maybe somehow see if we couldn’t divide up the work that is out there.

Chairman O’Neil stated David is absolutely right. I remember I stayed in Pittsburgh a number of years ago and saw near the hotel where I was staying a

city public works truck that had a high powered pressure washer on the back of a pick-up and two public works guys and Pittsburgh had some logo, they called it some program and they were out doing a park next to the hotel. The graffiti was done the night before and they were responding the next day to get it off. That was done with city public works people.

Ms. Lewry stated there are a lot of cities that actually have one person in charge of receiving the calls about graffiti, making sure there is a police report and then making sure that there is follow-up action right away.

Chairman O'Neil stated why don't we put this on the table.

Mr. Scannell replied we can report on Stephanie's tests next week and also on gathering various departments at a future meeting.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Smith, it was voted to place this item on the table.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee